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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/711,352	09/13/2004	Kenichiro TADA	040433	5351
23850	7590	03/15/2007	EXAMINER	
ARMSTRONG, KRATZ, QUINTOS, HANSON & BROOKS, LLP			GOOD JOHNSON, MOTILEWA	
1725 K STREET, NW			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
SUITE 1000				
WASHINGTON, DC 20006			2628	

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	03/15/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/711,352	TADA, KENICHIRO	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Motilewa Good-Johnson	2628	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 September 2004.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 13 September 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ . |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>09/14/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

2. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because

Regarding claim 6, the claim recites “a display control method for displaying a representative still image associated with contents data, the method comprising: a storing step for storing a reproduction date and time of the contents data; and an expression changing step for changing an expression of the representative still image associated with the contents data based on the number of lapsed days since a reproduction date and time of the contents data up to a display date and time of the representative still image.” The claim invention as a whole must accomplish a practical application, that is, it must produce a useful, concrete and tangible result or physical transformation.

Therefore, in order to determine if the process is statutory, one must determine what the computer does to achieve a practical application. A process that merely manipulates an abstract idea is non-statutory despite the fact that it might inherently have some usefulness. For such subject matter to be statutory, the claimed process must be limited to a practical application of the abstract idea. Examiner finds no limitation to a practical application for the claimed method. The preamble of the claim is given little weight in establishing a statutory claim when there are no elements in the claim limitations into which the preamble could give substantial meaning of a practical limitation.

Regarding claim 7, the claim recites “a recording medium storing in the readable state a program for executing a display control method for displaying a representative still image associated with contents data, the display control method including: a storing step for storing a reproduction date and time of the contents data; and an expression changing step for changing an expression of the representative still image associated with the contents data based on the number of lapsed days since a reproduction date and time of the contents data up to a display date and time of the representative still image”. However, the recording medium should be encoded with a program defines structural and functional interrelationship between the program and other claimed element of a computer to permit the programs functionality.

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the expression changing section must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inakura, U.S. Patent Publication 2004/0028377 A1, in view of Asai et al., U.S. Patent Publication 2002/0111940.

Regarding claim 1, Inakura disclose a display controller (1104) for controlling a display of a representative still image associated with contents data, the display controller comprising: a storage section (1103 recording and reproduction circuit) for storing a reproduction date and time of the contents data (paragraph 0060, the recording and reproducing circuit performs processing including recording data and time) and altering the representative still image based upon the days since a reproduction (paragraph 0075)

However, it is noted that Inakura fails to disclose and an expression changing section for changing an expression of the representative still image associated with the contents data based on the number of lapsed days since a reproduction date and time of the contents data.

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Asai discloses an expression changing section (20, expression format converter) for changing an expression of the representative still image associated with the contents (paragraph 0053).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include in the altered still images reproduced by Inakura an expressing changing converter as disclosed by Asai to reduce recording capacity and storage.

Regarding claim 2, Inakura discloses wherein the recording time period calculating means obtains the number of lapsed days by computing a time difference between a display request date and time of the representative still image and the reproduction date and time of the contents data (paragraph 0075)

Regarding claim 3, Inakura discloses wherein the storage section stores the reproduction date and time of the contents data when a contents reproduction period of time in which the contents data is reproduced becomes equal to or more than a prespecified period of time (paragraph 0008)

Regarding claim 4, Asai discloses wherein the expression includes at least one of transparency, color tone, presence of display, and size change (figure 4)

Regarding claim 5, Asai discloses wherein the expression changing section generates the representative still image from the contents data and changes the expression of the representative still image (figure 4)

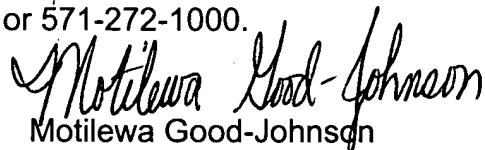
Regarding claim 6, it is rejected based upon similar rational as above claim 1. Inakura discloses a display control method for displaying a representative still image associated with contents data (paragraph 0006).

Regarding claim 7, it is rejected based upon similar rational as above claim 1. Inakura discloses a recording medium storing in the readable state a program for executing a display control method for displaying a representative still image associated with contents data (paragraph 0120).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Motilewa Good-Johnson whose telephone number is (571) 272-7658. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9:00 AM - 6:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kee Tung can be reached on (571) 272-7794. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Motilewa Good-Johnson
Examiner
Art Unit 2628

mgj